

POLITICAL.
REPUBLICAN REFORM.

The Approaching Convention for Revising the Rules of the Party.—The work that is before it—Necessity for Reform, and how it may be brought about.—The House of Representatives of the Fourth Ward, and their ill-representative power. On Monday next, a convention consisting of three delegates from each ward in the city, is to be held for the purpose of revising the rules of the Republican organization of Philadelphia.

The Present Rules of the Republican Party may be briefly summarized up as follows:— In each ward there is an organization known as the "Union Republican Association," made up of all the voters in the ward who are known to be members of the party, or in sympathy with its principles.

The City Executive Committee is made up of one member from each ward, elected by the several ward executive committees, and has the general control and supervision of the campaign throughout the city, and the power to fill any vacancy upon the city and county ticket, by the death or declination of any candidate thereon.

There is a separate convention held for nominating a candidate for each city and county office, except in the case of the judiciary, in which a single convention places in nomination candidates for all pending or approaching vacancies. These conventions are made up of one delegate from each election division in the city—207 in number at present—elected at the annual primary elections, except in special cases.

Before participating in the primary elections, each voter must be registered in his division by the Board of Registering Officers, which consists of the Republican Judge, or regular candidate for Judge, and the Inspectors of Election elected in October preceding, and the Executive Committee of each election division.

The annual primary elections are held on the second Tuesday in June, between 4 and 8 o'clock P. M. The Republican judges and inspectors elected at the preceding general election conduct the primary election, and in precincts that failed to elect the regular Republican candidates for judge and inspectors, such candidates shall be the judge and inspectors.

The Revised Democratic Rules. In August, 1869, the rules of the Democratic organization, which had previously been much the same as those of the Republicans, were materially modified; and, as there will probably be an attempt on the part of some of the members of the approaching convention to ingraft the new Democratic system upon the Republican party, in whole or in part, it is worth while to glance in this connection at the machinery of our antagonists.

The Democratic rules residing in each election division shall also, at the same time and place, annually elect three delegates to represent said division in a ward convention, to be called the "Ward Delegates Convention," to elect delegates to conventions for nominating candidates for city and county offices and to judicial conventions, each citizen to vote for two persons, and the three persons receiving the highest number of votes to be declared elected; also three delegates to a "Ward Nominating Convention," to be called the "Ward Delegates Convention," to elect delegates to conventions for nominating candidates for city and county offices, when required, one in "Senatorial," one in "Congressional," one in "Survivor's" convention (exceptions were such divisions are divided by the Surveyor's district), then they shall elect one for each division, except the Twenty-fourth ward (Eleventh and Twelfth divisions), who shall elect two delegates from each division. The tickets voted shall be headed on the outside respectively, "Judges of Election," "Executive Committee," "Delegates to Ward Delegates Convention," "Delegates to Ward Nominating Convention," "Representative Delegates," and "Survivor Delegates," "Congressional Delegates," and "Survivor Delegates."

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is entitled to three delegates in each of the city and county conventions, and in the Judicial Convention, so that the nominating convales of the Democracy consist of but eighty-four members each. The delegates to these nominating conventions are selected by the "ward delegate conventions" on the day following the primary elections, each member voting for two delegates to the nominating conventions, while the three having the highest number of votes are declared elected.

By the provisions of rule 31 the City Executive Committee is required to select by ballot one of its own members to organize each of the city, county, and judicial conventions, the person so selected not to be a member of any of these conventions. The temporary organizer thus appointed is required to proceed to the place where the convention is to be held, to call the body to order, and to preside over its deliberations until a permanent organization is effected; and, as soon as this task is accomplished, it is made his duty to retire, and report his action to the City Executive Committee.

The changes brought about in this way were inaugurated at the recent nominating conventions of the Democracy, and at all appearances worked well. The city conventions being made up of only 84 members each, instead of 307, were much less unwieldy than before, and the selection of temporary organizers by the Executive Committee prevented a row between the factions for the control of the temporary organization. For the first time in the recent history of the Democratic party of Philadelphia, a delegate to one of their conventions stood a fair chance of getting through with his patriotic task without receiving a broken head, and the conventions were models of order and decency.

The Delegate Election System. But the Democrats did not go far enough in their experiment at reform, and in their organization, as in the Republican, the greatest source of corruption and fraud remained untouched. The delegate election system is radically wrong and inherently fraudulent, and no substantial or satisfactory reform can be hoped for until it is utterly overthrown. The city of Philadelphia is at present divided into 307 election divisions, and, as will be seen from the summary of the Republican rules given above, each of these divisions has an equal representation in all nominating conventions, whether local or general. If the Republican voting population of the 307 divisions were the same, or approached equality in point of numbers, the case would be different. Unequal as they are, equality of representation is a manifest injustice which demands an immediate and radical remedy.

The last full vote polled in Philadelphia, without being subsequently tampered with by the Return Judges or the courts, was that cast for Auditor-General of the State in October, 1868, reaching on the Republican side a total of 60,663. This vote fell but 322 below that cast for the Grant Electoral ticket in November, 1868, and was 9461 larger than the vote polled by Governor Geary in October, 1869. It may therefore be taken as a fair estimate of the full Republican strength of the city at present; and taking it as such, we are able to show the actual and the proper representation of the Republican voters of each ward in the nominating conventions of the party. The 307 delegates having an aggregate constituency of 60,663, their average constituency is a little below 200 voters. Making fair allowances for fractions of a full constituency of 300 voters, we have the following result, the wards marked thus (*) being those in which the Republicans were in the majority in October, 1868.

Table with 4 columns: Ward, Rep. Vote, Dem. Vote, Total. Lists wards 1 through 14 with their respective vote counts.

This simple table tells the whole story, but a little explanation of its details will not be amiss. The last vote in the city of which we have the details by divisions in print and accessible for present purposes, is that cast for President in November, 1868, when the strength of the party was fairly polled, and no changes in the returns made which will affect our purpose of comparison. At this time, however, there were but 270 election divisions, thirty-seven having been since created by the splitting up of some of the more populous divisions. The Republican vote was 60,985, which, divided among 270 divisions, gives an average Republican voting population of about 225. But, when we turn to the Republican vote of the different divisions we find it ranging as follows in each of the wards:—

Table with 4 columns: Ward, Smallest Division, Largest Division, Smallest Largest. Lists wards 1 through 14 with their smallest and largest division vote counts.

In the following table is shown the range of the Republican vote between certain figures:— Table with 2 columns: Range, Number of Divisions. Lists vote ranges from 100 to 500 and the corresponding number of divisions.

The highest vote polled, 530, was in the Seventh ward, the number of divisions in which has since been increased from 8 to 14. The next highest, 529, was in the Fifteenth ward, in which the divisions have been increased from 14 to 19. The next highest, 485, was in the Twentieth ward, where there are now 23 divisions instead of 16. Thus some of the most glaring wrongs inflicted upon the Republicans in the divisions which poll the large Republican votes have been remedied, and the strength of the rotten boroughs correspondingly diminished. But we believe that none of the divisions in which the Republican voters are a mere handful have been consolidated, as they should be, to give our delegate elections a shadow of justice. There are still at least 5 divisions in which the Republican vote is below 50, and 27 altogether in which it is below 100. These 27 divisions, by their representatives in the different conventions, can and do dictate to the Republican party of Philadelphia the names of its candidates. The usual cry in urging political reform is to defend the minority from the majority; but here it is reversed, and the majority demand to be released from the mischievous sway of the minority.

There is no justice in allowing 30 Republicans in the Fourth ward as much voice in the management of the party as is accorded to 300 in the Tenth ward; there is no justice in allowing the 1194 Republican voters of the Fourth ward 11 representatives in the conventions of the party while the 2838 Republican voters of the Tenth ward have but 13, in giving 3 delegates to the 1100 Republican voters of the Eleventh ward and the same number to the 2310 Republican voters of the Thirteenth ward; there is no justice in according to about 15,000 voters in 103 election divisions half as much weight in the council of the party as is accorded to the 47,000 in the remaining 304 divisions. To claim that there is no remedy for this and other defects of the system of nominating candidates in vogue in this city, is to defy common sense, to claim that there is no demand for the application of a remedy is to defy the voice of all the party except such as are interested directly in maintaining this defective system.

It is not our present purpose to attempt a discussion of the merits of the possible projects of reform that may be entertained at the approaching Convention. We have shown, in a few startling figures, the enormity of the inequality of representation which demands equalization, and this is but one of the many defects to be found in our present organization. We trust that the Convention will not adjourn without doing something to purify and strengthen the party in this city. But a few words on what is known as

The Crawford County System will not be amiss. Of all the schemes that have yet been proposed here or elsewhere, this is the only one which affords a prospect of full relief from the evils and defects of the old system. It consists simply in the holding of an informal election, under the supervision of the recognized party organization, each voter casting a ballot for his first choice for any and every office to be filled. The highest on the poll become the candidate, and around him those who made other candidates for the nomination their first choice are expected to rally at the regular election. This system is now in operation in many of the interior counties of the State, among them being Crawford, Westmoreland, Indiana, Lancaster, and Allegheny. Wherever it has had a fair and impartial trial, it has worked admirably, and fully satisfied the expectations of its advocates, and sooner or later it is destined to spread over the entire State.

We have before us the official returns of the Republican primary election held under the Crawford county system in Lancaster county, on the 28th of August, 1869. A brief analysis of the figures will serve to show how the system operates in the county polling the heaviest Republican vote outside of Philadelphia and Allegheny. The vote for candidates for the nominations for the positions named below was as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Candidate Name, Votes. Lists candidates for Sheriff, Auditor, and Auditor-General with their respective vote counts.

The Republican vote polled in Lancaster county at the regular election immediately following the primary election the results of which are given above, and at several preceding elections, was as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Election Year, Republican Vote. Lists years from 1860 to 1869 with corresponding Republican vote counts.

The average vote for candidates for the four positions named above at the primary election of August, 1869, was 11,304, and the vote at the regular election next ensuing, as shown, 13,804, or slightly in excess of the average vote for six years. This gives a fraction over 81 per cent. of the Republican vote in October, 1869, and a little less than 71 per cent. of the highest Republican vote ever polled in the county, as being drawn out by the Crawford county system at a primary election in which there was no vital nomination issue at stake. And for the nomination for which there was but a single aspirant the vote at the primary election is seen to have fallen only 408 behind the aggregate vote for the eleven aspirants for another nomination. Such a result, when compared with the beggarly proportion brought out by the old system—never reaching these figures and being usually not half as large—is the most conclusive argument that can be adduced in favor of adopting the new system, the only argument that should be needed to induce the coming convention to adopt it. Under the system now in vogue here, the great mass of the party have but a slim chance for a just and impartial hearing, and this chance they get but little value upon; under the Crawford county system they have every chance to be heard, and, as the result shows, they are accustomed to make the most of their opportunity.

The Chester County system. In Chester county a system is in vogue which accomplishes the objects aimed at by the Crawford county system, under certain conditions. But one convention is held, and each delegate is bound to follow the instructions of a majority of his constituents. The voters at the primary elections write below the name of their choice for delegate the name of their choice for each office for which a nomination is to be made. A count of these instructions is made by the election officers, and the delegate, becoming a mere machine, casts his vote in the convention on each nomination in accordance with the result. If he fails to comply with his instructions, he will scarcely have the hardihood to present himself again as a candidate for delegate. In case the constituencies of the delegates are equal or nearly so, or in case they are equalized by a regular apportionment after each annual election, this system of instruction practically answers the purpose of the Crawford county system, and is an immense improvement on that in vogue in this city. But it lacks the simplicity of the Crawford county system, and opens a door to fraud through defiance of instructions, which is impossible under the direct vote for candidates. Moreover, it is possible, under its operations, for a candidate to be placed in nomination in defiance of the wishes of the majority. Thus, suppose in a convention made up of 100 delegates, 51 are instructed to vote for Jones for a certain nomination, and 49 to vote for Smith for the same position. If Smith is almost universally popular in a half dozen or so of the 49 districts which were carried by his delegates, while Jones' delegates were elected by a fair majority only, it will be seen that Smith is in justice entitled to the nomination carried off by Jones. But even with this drawback, and the additional one of needless complication, the system of instructing delegates, coupled with an equalization of representation in the conventions, would be a great stride in the way of progress.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Mr. Forrest as "Richard III." "Richard III," as Shakespeare drew him, is, like "Jago," a perfect villain. He is something more, however, than a mere malicious, intriguing Italian, and his craft and cruelty are balanced by his ambition and valor. "Richard" too is troubled by the remnant of a conscience, and although he is fierce, bold and bloody to the last, the spectre of his evil deeds haunts him and paralyze his arm when he is called upon to give an account of them. Mr. Forrest does not play "Richard III" as frequently as some other of the characters in his repertoire, but in some respects it is one of his most masterly efforts. The announcement that he would appear at the hunchback tyrant attracted a crowded house last evening at the Walnut, and the performance was followed with intense interest from first to last. Mr. Forrest's conception of "Richard" character is original and in the highest degree artistic. He invests him with a sort of Mephistophelian humor, and at the opening scene his demeanor is almost jovial. The quick transition from one mood to another, however, is remarkable, and during one moment and snarling the next, or venting his hardly restrained ferocity upon any and every object, Mr. Forrest presents "Richard" with a soul as crooked as his body. Mr. Forrest in the first three acts of the play gives a Shakespearean study in every way admirable. After that we have merely the conventional stage "Richard III," plus the genius that Mr. Forrest cannot help infusing into his least commendable efforts, and minus some of the activity that distinguished his performance of the part when he was a younger man than he is now.

The City Amusements. AT THE WALNUT Mr. Forrest will repeat "Richard III" this evening. The drama of The Flying Scud will be presented to-morrow afternoon and evening. AT THE ARCH Street Opera House an open to-morrow evening with Goldsmith's comedy of The Two Gentlemen of Verona and the comedieta of The Swiss Soldier. On Monday Victorine Sardou's play of Fernande will be produced. AT THE ELEVENTH STREET OPERA HOUSE an excellent programme of minstrelsy is announced for this evening. AT THE ARCH STREET OPERA HOUSE songs, dances, and Ethiopian comicallies will be given this evening. AT THE AMERICAN the French wrestlers and other attractions will be presented this evening. From the Public Record, Sept. 7.

FOX'S AMERICAN VARIETIES.—The French wrestlers made their first appearance at this popular establishment on Monday evening. Their style of wrestling is artistic and unlike the movements included in ordinary wrestling. The feat performed by them astonishes all beholders. A loaded cannon, which requires half a dozen men to lift, is placed on the shoulders of one of the wrestlers; then it is dropped off. The contest is great, but the greatest stands as firm as a rock. The dancing blondes and the Clinetop sisters are popular, and the same may be said of the entire troupe. By liberality and discrimination Mr. Fox won popularity, which he fully maintains. This establishment is jammed with people every evening.

CITY ITEMS.

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THE BIG FALL AND WINTER SUITS, which are so popular at this time and so beautifully cut, made, and trimmed, and in such vast varieties that you have only to look upon them and they will speak to you—not in an audible voice, but by a power more potent than words—they will speak to your understanding, to your peculiar interests, to your personal appearance, even to physical powers, for they adorn you with a full chest and broad and square shoulders. There is nothing to compare with the \$15 suits sold at the Great Brown Stone Hall, Nos. 603 and 605 CHESTNUT STREET.

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NEW PERIODICALS.—From the Central News Company, No. 626 Chestnut street, we have received the following: THE YOUNG MAN'S COMPANION; The Young Man's Year Book; Punch and Fun; Turner & Co. send us Every Saturday; Appleton's Journal; and Our Boys and Girls.

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DIED. FREDERICK.—In Richmond, Va., on the 9th instant, STE JACOB, wife of Samuel Freedy.

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